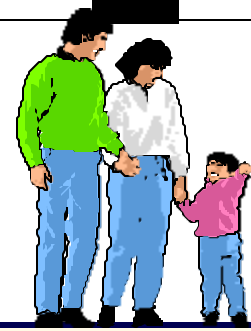# *Methods for Gathering Community Concerns*

(Low Intensity, ((Moderate, (((High

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1   Review of Community Relations Plans   (

Review of the EPA, DOD, DOE, or other Federal agencies required "Community Relations Plans" . For federal sites, review also the public relations file.

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2   Public Availability and Public Meetings   (

Summarize the findings from your own or other agencies public meetings.

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3   Current Community Profile   (

To find a Community Profile for a specific town, go to:
http://www.amshomefinder.com/index_community.html or http://census.gov

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4   Query of Environmental Justice Interest or Native American   (

Assemble information from websites on local environmental justice/ tribal/ or community interest groups. Examples include:
Environmental Justice: http://www.igc.apc.org/envjustice/maps/continen.html.   Native American site: http://www.nativeweb.org/sitemap.html

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5   Socio-Demographic Profile   ((

A status report done by GIS/demographers that profiles changes from the 1990-2000 demographic files on certain socio/demographics fields and compares it to regional or national averages. Those fields may include: Income (including those below the poverty level), Race, Age, Education level, Occupation, blue collar/white collar breakdowns, Length of residence, Median home value, Median rent value, Language spoken at home. (All cost data would be adjusted for inflation). Use this for higher intensity sites where it may be important to see what has changed.

6   Query of Local Agencies

A quick phone survey of the local health and environmental departments, chamber of commerce, mayor's office, etc:

'   Check the <u>number</u> and <u>frequency</u> of complaints or concerns with key people or agencies that would generally receive those before and after our involvement.

'   Check the types of people interested (activists only, civic groups, mayor's office, etc) (before and after our involvement).

'   Check the type of community concerns. They might include:

(1) Cancer	(2) Non-cancer endpoints (birth defects, miscarriages, learning disorders)
(3) Symptoms (breathing difficulties, headaches, etc)	(4) Safety (ok to work, play etc.)
(5) Sampling	(6) General fear of getting sick
(7) Ongoing activities of health concern	(8) Remediation
(9) Property values	(10) Odor; nuisance

'   Note the number and frequency of 800 # inquiries, letters, and other phone inquiries that come into ATSDR. When did they occur? After an incident or document release? Is the request flow steady?

7   Query of Community Groups

A quick phone survey of community members or groups similar to the agency query. Check community organizational group list or list of non-profit community groups in the area.

8   Query of "Hot" Local Media Issues (Recent and Past)   ((

Internet search of local newspaper or websites for the "hot" issues. Also, a simple phone query of reporters and a library search request can help refine the "hot" topics. Categorize the topics as *General* (e.g., taxes, property values, jobs), *Environmental* (e.g., water rights, lack of water, air pollution), and *Health* (e.g., cancer rates, unexplained illnesses, health care access). Note the level of activity in each topic category currently, since the hazardous waste site was on the NPL, and when the community concern level started to increase.

Provide a relative ranking of issues at each site. Cross reference the level of local interest to the national interest level. For example:

Topic	# of Articles Coverage	Site-Specific Relative Ranking	Nat'l Ranking in Media
	0-1	' Low	' Low, ' Med, ' High
	2-5	' Med	
	5-10	' High	
	10+	' Very High	

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9   Periodic query/review of Hot Media Issues over time - For projected High Hazard or High Community Concern Sites   (((

Periodically check the concern level to identify when the community concern level and the level of identified risk becomes disproportionate. (These sites would then become High Community Concern sites. Use ranking scheme as above.

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10   ATSDR Needs Assessment   (((

Currently executed through NACCHO with local health departments - See guidance document for details and examples of completed assessments.

11   Small Group Query   (((

' Conduct a small scale key informant query and/or
' Conduct a small scale phone query on approximately 25 people within 1 mile of the site and get knowledge and attitudes on the general site, decisions made, level of health concern (related to and unrelated to the site)

12   Focus Group or Large Group Query   (((

Conduct site-specific focus groups or large group query and determine the knowledge and attitudes on the general site, decisions made, level of health concern (related to and unrelated to the site)